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Chairman: Mr. VILCHEZ ASHER (Nicaragua)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997 (continued)

Progress report on the implementation of the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (continued) (A/50/7/Add.16; A/C.5/50/57)

1. Mr. LOZINSKY (Russian Federation) said that his delegation welcomed the efforts made by the Secretary-General to enhance the efficiency of the Organization. At the same time, the form and content of the progress report (A/C.5/50/57) were very general and vague, and sometimes ran counter to the General Assembly's directives. Although the General Assembly had clearly specified, in resolution 50/214, that savings in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 should not affect the full implementation of mandated programmes and activities, the Secretary-General indicated that delays and postponements caused by resource reductions were to be expected. Furthermore, there were no specific proposals on further measures to improve efficiency, contain administrative costs and achieve savings. Part III, section B, entitled "Programmatic and budgetary considerations" was very general and preliminary in nature although it was precisely in that area that Member States were entitled to expect specific and precise proposals and recommendations.

2. His delegation had already expressed support for the three-phase approach designed to enhance the efficiency of the Organization formulated by the Secretary-General. However, even the implementation of the first phase was not fully covered in the report. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's comments on that question in paragraph 38 of its report (A/50/7/Add.16).

3. The vacancy rate proposed by the Secretary-General, particularly for Professional posts, was at variance with the General Assembly's recommendations. His delegation wished to know why it was necessary to increase the vacancy rate for Professional posts rather than resorting to other cost-saving options not linked with staff costs, since that step could have adverse consequences for the implementation of approved programmes. Furthermore, there was no indication in the report of the financial implications associated with the early separation programme or involuntary separations. In view of the current financial situation of the Organization, the implementation of those measures would have only a minimal impact in terms of savings. His delegation sought specific information on those programmes and in particular on their financial implications. At the same time it drew attention to the need to establish a more appropriate ratio of permanent to fixed-term contracts.

4. Despite the report's shortcomings, it was a step in the right direction. Taking into account the comments and recommendations made by Member States and the Advisory Committee, a concrete plan should be worked out to implement the current budget within the parameters laid down in General Assembly resolution 50/214.

5. Mr. ZHANG Wanhai (China) said that his delegation fully supported the views put forward at the 60th meeting by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

6. The budgetary procedure laid down in General Assembly resolution 41/213 must be fully respected, including the provisions regarding additional expenditures and the contingency fund.

7. The budget laid down in General Assembly resolution 50/214 should not be treated as a ceiling. The work of the United Nations formed a whole; it was not possible to undermine some activities in order to finance others.

8. It was not clear from the report of the Secretary-General which specific activities and programmes of the United Nations would have to be postponed. According to General Assembly resolution 50/214, savings in the current budget should not affect the implementation of programmes and activities. Any postponement, cancellation or reduction of projects or programmes must be approved by the General Assembly.

9. The restrictions on the supply of paper and pencils in conference rooms caused serious inconvenience to delegations; his delegation hoped that the problem would be solved in the near future.

10. Mr. RODRIGUEZ PARRILLA (Cuba) said that his delegation's general position was reflected in the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China. The item under consideration was of great importance since the outcome of the deliberations would determine the future of the budgetary process agreed upon by consensus in General Assembly resolution 41/213. The ambiguity and lack of detail in the report of the Secretary-General complicated the deliberations. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the report should have included more information, particularly regarding programmatic and budgetary aspects. It hoped that the final report would be presented in the normal budgetary format and would contain sufficient information to enable the General Assembly to take well-founded decisions.

11. The budgetary negotiations for 1996-1997 had been very complex, but they had led to a delicate and balanced agreement. His delegation hoped that there would be no attempt to renegotiate the agreed terms in order to advance domestic political agendas.

12. In resolution 50/214, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to present a report containing proposals of possible savings for its consideration and approval. However, the Secretariat had already begun to implement various cost-saving measures which were inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the resolution. Clarification was therefore needed about the Secretariat's interpretation of the mandate given by the General Assembly, as well as clear and detailed information about the measures taken and the amounts involved.

13. Approval of the Secretary-General's proposal to increase the vacancy rate to 9 per cent for Professional posts and 7 per cent for General Service posts would amount to an across-the-board budget cut which would have a negative

influence on the implementation of the legislative mandates and would contradict part II, paragraph 6, of General Assembly resolution 50/214. The demand by the Congress of the largest contributor for "certification" by the United States Secretary of State that the budget had not exceeded $2,608 million before it approved its contribution to the Organization was not only contrary to the treaty obligations of Members of the Organization but also, if accepted by the General Assembly, would create a serious precedent: the extraterritorial application of a State's domestic legislation.

14. With regard to the alternatives proposed by the Secretariat to achieve the target vacancy rate, more information was needed on the costs and benefits of the early separation programme.

15. In recent years there had been a growing tendency to use personnel on loan to the Secretariat and external consultants. Although such persons were useful in certain circumstances, they did not represent a solution to the financial problems of the Organization: the maintenance of an efficient international civil service committed to the purposes and principles of the Organization was a condition sine qua non of its independent functioning. His delegation was concerned about the impact of the use of such persons on the impartiality of the Secretariat and the geographical imbalance created since the individuals came mainly from countries with the ability to finance them and were assigned to areas of particular interest to those countries, thereby distorting the priorities and programmes approved by the General Assembly. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that there was also the potential danger of losing institutional memory.

16. Another notorious anomaly of the budgetary process was the role of the Efficiency Board. Judging by the normal behaviour of senior Secretariat officials, there appeared to be a tendency to ignore the decisions and opinions of the legislative bodies and to act in accordance with the wishes of a few Member States which had predominant power over appointments to the most senior managerial posts in the Organization. A specific example was requests for information about the Efficiency Board. Many delegations, including his own, had repeatedly requested information about the structure, function, sources of financing and mandate of the Board and had received no reply.

17. It was well known that the 1996-1997 programme budget had been approved in exceptional circumstances, and was a political agreement to solve the difficult situation faced by the Organization; however, the level of that budget could not prejudge the level of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 or constitute a budgetary ceiling. The Committee could not renegotiate the budget or the budgetary process laid down in General Assembly resolution 41/213. If any delegation wished to modify or renegotiate part of it, his delegation would be forced to propose that it be renegotiated in its entirety, including the decision-making process itself. Consequently, the Committee could only consider concrete and tangible proposals by the Secretary-General to achieve additional savings, provided that the Secretary-General guaranteed that there would be no negative consequences for programmes and activities. The indications by the Secretary-General that reductions of that magnitude would inevitably require some reduction in services and that there would be delays and postponements in programme delivery were a clear demonstration that the Secretary-General was not

able to make proposals in accordance with the mandate he had received from the General Assembly.

18. The reduction of the budget should not be an end in itself but should result in greater efficiency in the work of the United Nations translated into a better use of the resources allocated in the fulfilment of the mandates adopted.

19. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) said that his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to implement the decisions taken by the General Assembly regarding the 1996-1997 programme budget. It fully endorsed the views put forward on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

20. It must be borne in mind that the United Nations programme budget was demand driven, and must respond to the needs of global society. The demand for programme activities was a constant factor which could not be changed. However, there was more flexibility in terms of supply, or resource generation, and the United Nations should take advantage of that flexibility in times of need. It was important to implement the budget in accordance with the mandated programme activities.

21. There were certain perceptions behind the demand for cost reductions and the generation of savings. One assumption was that the United Nations was disproportionate in size and that as a result there was duplication and overlap. While serious attention must be paid to unnecessary proliferation and overlap, it must be borne in mind that the United Nations was a multilateral body which dealt with a vast range of issues. The real challenge was to enable the United Nations to address the issues that were critical to the international community and ensure that all countries participated meaningfully in its work. Another perception was that the United Nations was a sprawling bureaucracy. The Secretariat was smaller than the civil service of many individual States. The size of the United Nations needed to be viewed in terms of the volume, complexity and diversity of its activities and of whether the staff was of a size and quality commensurate to the scope of the tasks. Staff cuts could be detrimental to the Organization. A third perception was that the expenditure of the United Nations was excessive; however, it represented a minuscule per capita amount and the total budget was less than the budget of many major cities. As had been noted by the Mayor of New York City, it was less than the combined budget for the police and fire departments of New York City. Improved efficiency in the use of financial resources was essential, but savings and rationalization of expenditure must be related to key variables and the objectives to be achieved. His delegation agreed with the view put forward in paragraph 30 of the Advisory Committee's report regrading loaned personnel.

22. He hoped that the points he had made would be taken into account in the process of cost reduction and enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations. Any large organization had some operating problems which needed to be viewed realistically, without taking any abrupt decisions. His delegation requested the Secretary-General to inform the Committee in detail about future courses of action and their likely impact on programmes so that the Committee could try to save the Organization from further deterioration.

23. Mr. PALIZ (Ecuador) said that his delegation's position had been put forward by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. His delegation reiterated that any action taken to effect savings must not affect programmes already approved by the General Assembly: General Assembly resolution 50/214 could not be ignored.

24. The General Assembly must decide on any modification of the programmes and activities which had been approved. The Group of 77 and China had warned about the adverse consequences of any reduction in the 1996-1997 budget; the United Nations was now experiencing serious difficulties in implementing the activities approved by the General Assembly.

25. His delegation believed that reforms were needed in the United Nations to eliminate unnecessary expenditure and achieve greater efficiency. However, the political nature of the Organization, and the Purposes laid down in Article 1 of the Charter, must be borne in mind. Member States had a legal obligation to provide resources to achieve those Purposes.

26. Mr. VARELA (Chile), referring to the statement made by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed concern that if budget cuts were to be more extensive, they could seriously affect the work of the Organization. While savings were necessary, it should be remembered that the United Nations, the main global political forum for dialogue and harmonization of views, was a political organization with 185 Member States. In order to ensure the multiplicity and diversity of interests, the Organization must be provided with full and efficient conference services with equal facilities for all the working languages. In that regard, he fully agreed with the concerns expressed by the Committee on Conferences in document A/C.5/50/66.

27. He was also concerned by the warning in paragraph 40 of the Advisory Committee's report that the cuts might lead to a general deterioration in the quality of virtually all United Nations activities if programme priorities were not carefully selected. It was especially important to avoid any deterioration of United Nations activities in the economic and social spheres, which constituted a real guarantee of establishing a friendlier world that could create the conditions for peace, prosperity and freedom to which all the membership aspired.

28. The Organization was committed, under the 1996-1997 programme budget, to ensuring that approved mandates should not be affected by the cost-cutting exercise. Since more than 70 per cent of expenditure was on personnel, the elimination of posts would undoubtedly affect some programmes and activities. Therefore, cost-saving measures should take into account the mandates of the major global conferences held in recent years. More background information was needed by Member States for them to take timely and informed decisions.

29. The incorporation of new technology into the work of the United Nations presupposed an improvement in productivity and efficiency. Therefore, delays in the delivery of such technology would also have undesirable effects that an administration looking to the future must avoid. In that respect also, further information was required.

30. He appreciated the excellent work of the Secretariat in presenting its provisional report on savings which could be generated through efficiency measures. Member States and the Secretariat had the legal basis necessary in order to implement the provisions of resolution 50/214. The quality of United Nations activities and programmes must not decline. The General Assembly, on the basis of information available, must take timely decisions to strengthen the democratic process enshrined in the Charter and resolution 41/213.

31. Ms. INCERA (Costa Rica) said it had been brought to her attention that a paragraph of the statement made by the Colombian delegation on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the 60th meeting, had been omitted in the interpretation into English. She therefore wished to reiterate that procedures existed for the revision of the budget in order to include new mandates or extend mandates as well as for the financing of additional activities through the contingency fund. That occurrence demonstrated the importance of ensuring that adequate resources were made available for conference services; otherwise the quality of the Organization's work would be affected.

32. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Joint Inspection Unit), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit, referred to the statement made by the delegation of Canada, on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, and the statement made by the delegation of Mexico. Paragraph 7 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/50/57) concerning the Joint Inspection Unit, was incomplete and misleading. It was hard to understand why the Unit had been singled out since it was not the only oversight body that had not proposed any reduction. While General Assembly resolution 50/214 had asked the Secretary-General to ensure fair, equitable and non-selective treatment of all budget sections, it had not explicitly meant that the Secretary-General's proposals should be applied evenly across the board.

33. JIU had stated in its correspondence with the Secretariat that resolution 50/214 was comprehensive and should be implemented with respect for the full legislative history leading to its approval. Referring to part III, paragraph 65, of resolution 50/214, he said that, in the Unit's opinion, it was a clear mandate to the Secretary-General to be attentive to the Unit's needs as reiterated in several General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolutions 43/221, 45/237 and 48/221. The Unit looked forward to the Secretary-General's implementation of that mandate. The provision of part III, paragraph 64, precluded any cost-saving measure related to JIU staff expenditure. The Unit was still waiting for the Secretary-General to take action before June 1996 to fill the four vacancies in its secretariat. Since staff costs were some 89.9 per cent of the total JIU budget, the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposal to save $540,000 without reducing staff would have required a 55.41 per cent reduction from non-staff expenditures, which was unrealistic. The Unit thanked the Group of 77 for understanding why JIU should be excluded from the current exercise.

34. Referring to part I, paragraph 8, of resolution 50/214, he said that the resolution had also endorsed the request of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should report on what he and the executive heads of participating organizations had done to consider giving JIU extrabudgetary resources and programme support. As far as JIU knew, no steps to that end had

been taken; it therefore looked forward to the Secretary-General's action on that directive. The different status of JIU had been recognized by the Secretary-General in implementing the recommendation made by the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations in 1986 for a reduction of 15 per cent in the United Nations staff, as requested by General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211. The United Nations share of the Joint Inspection Unit's budget was about 21.34 per cent. Therefore, about 78.66 per cent of any savings would have to be reimbursed to the Unit's other participating bodies. The proposed measures to cut the JIU budget would contradict the General Assembly's directives.

35. The Unit had reiterated several times to the United Nations Secretariat that it would strive to undertake internal cost-saving measures in order to assist in easing the financial difficulties faced by Member States. Recently, it had informed the Secretariat that it had projected savings of $148,000 in 1996, representing some 3.9 per cent of its annual allocation.

36. Mr. HANSON (Canada) said that the Joint Inspection Unit's mandate did not include the prerogative of sitting in judgement on the actions of Member States. He did not share the view that an exception must be made for the Joint Inspection Unit from the provisions of resolution 50/214. Had it been the General Assembly's intention to make an exception for any particular entity, such entity would have been named in the resolution. Therefore, he looked forward to the Joint Inspection Unit's full cooperation with the Secretary-General in his attempt to achieve savings in the programme budget.

37. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), replying to questions raised at the previous meeting, said that the vacancy rates of 9 per cent for Professional staff and 7 per cent for General Service staff were the result of projections by programme managers as to the level of vacancies required to achieve the mandated level of savings under resolution 50/214. As the preponderance of costs in the regular budget related to posts, the required reduction of $104 million could not be achieved without savings in staff costs. That level could not be achieved without a vacancy rate in excess of 6.4 per cent. The programmatic justification for the increased rates was based on the attempt to fulfil all mandates. The efficiency gains made should still allow the delivery of all mandated programmes.

38. In response to a question raised about the criteria for the reductions in the various budget sections, he noted that the reductions had been distributed proportionately among the various sections of the budget in line with General Assembly resolution 50/214. The only exception related to section 20, where reductions had been made to conform with paragraph 35 of resolution 50/214, which had called for the maintenance of the same budgetary level as in the biennium 1994-1995.

39. Concerning the request for the clarification of the terms "delayed", "deferred" and "postponed" and for a list of activities affected, he noted that the deadline imposed on the Secretary-General for the submission of his preliminary report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/C.5/50/57) did not allow such detailed information to be provided. The

subsequent report to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly would provide such details as well as proposals for savings. While it was anticipated that some outputs would be delayed and produced later in the biennium 1966-1997 than originally planned, there were others whose production would be deferred or postponed from the current biennium to the following biennium. Programme managers would endeavour to minimize postponements, delays and deferrals.

40. Concerning the impact of the post vacancy situation on the 1998-1999 budget outline and the related programme budget, preparations would be guided by the requirements of annex I of resolution 41/213, which established the budgetary procedure. However, it provided no guidance on vacancy rates. The Secretary-General would take into account all relevant facts when formulating his proposal for the programme outline.

41. With respect to the treatment of representation allowance in the current financial situation, he said that initial payments of those entitlements had been due in early January 1996 but had been withheld, pending improvement in the overall financial situation. The allowance would now be paid by the end of May.

42. As to what the Secretary-General was expecting from the General Assembly after the consideration of the report in document A/C.5/50/57, he said that since the report had been produced in response to a specific request of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General expected the General Assembly to provide him with such guidance as the Assembly deemed appropriate.

43. On the question of why the budget of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) had been reduced more than that of other regional commissions, he said that the reduction applied was close to the midpoint of reductions for the regional commissions. Concerning the proposed reductions for the Department of Administration and Management, he said that his own office had been reduced by 5 per cent, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts by 6 per cent and the Office of Human Resources Management by 4 per cent. Support services had been reduced by 3 per cent. Those reductions had been pragmatic. Of the specific reductions mandated, $18.5 million had already been cut in December 1995 by the Fifth Committee, $8 million of which related to support services. Accordingly, if that amount was taken into account, the reduction in funding for support services would be on the order of 6 per cent. Furthermore, in the budget adopted in December $3.7 million had been cut from construction, alteration and improvement.

44. Responding to the questions raised about the early separation programmes, he said that the 1995 programme had been developed to give the Organization the flexibility it needed to meet its senior staff needs and diversify its mix of skills in order to keep pace with the evolving requirements of the global Secretariat. The compensation packages had been developed to minimize the negative impact of the early separation programme on departing staff, particularly in terms of pension benefits.

45. As part of the Secretary-General's effort to achieve the desired vacancy rates and cost reductions in the implementation of the programme budget, every effort had been made to maximize natural attrition and to minimize the involuntary separation of staff, which would not only be costly but would also

delay the implementation of the budget resolutions. Staff members who were due to liberate posts identified for suspension were therefore given first priority in the selection process.

46. With regard to the funding of the early separation programme, the estimated $15 million which the programme would cost in 1996 would be found from the provision made for common staff costs. In terms of composition, the original total of 115 posts for 1995 had been increased to 246 in the light of General Assembly resolutions 50/214 and 50/215 in order to raise the vacancy levels and find the savings required by those resolutions.

47. Approximately 143 staff members would be included in the ongoing 1996 programme. The aim was to enable the Secretary-General to freeze posts, reach mandated savings and, in some cases, accommodate other staff awaiting redeployment. As to the Professional staff participating in the programme, nationals of 41 countries were involved; the gender breakdown was 36 men and 19 women and 25 men and 7 women for 1995 and 1996, respectively. Upon completion of the 1996 programme, the data would be made available to the Committee in informal discussions.

48. Given the considerably lower vacancy rate for the General Service category, the focus of the 1996 early separation programme was on General Service staff. With respect to the vacancy rate for Professionals, however, the target to the end of 1997 would be met as far as possible through normal attrition, voluntary separations (largely through the buy-out programme), redeployment and, finally, involuntary separations, where staff in posts identified for redeployment could not be matched with job requirements in other areas of the Secretariat. The administration was currently in the process of finalizing the 1996 early separation programme, which involved the identification of staff for redeployment and putting together the compendium of posts for which they could apply.

49. Every effort was being made to minimize involuntary separations and to avoid a "brain drain", which would cause the Organization to lose qualified, long-serving staff who could still contribute effectively to its work. It was important not to lose the investment which the Organization made in training its staff. Performance, mobility, training and linguistic skills were therefore key considerations in reviewing staff included in the redeployment programme.

50. With regard to the legal justification for involuntary separations, it was necessary to reduce expenditure on staff in order to achieve the savings mandated by the General Assembly. If voluntary staff reductions could not achieve the necessary savings, the Secretary-General would be compelled to resort to the power given to him by staff regulations 9.1 (a) and (b) to terminate appointments if the necessities of the service required reduction of the staff.

51. As for the rationale for the ongoing freeze in recruitment and the exceptions being made in order to continue to recruit successful candidates from national competitive examinations and to meet specialist and technical needs which could not be met internally, he said that external recruitment was a last resort in such cases. By continuing to recruit candidates from national

competitive examinations, the Secretary-General was seeking to sustain the lifeline of the core international civil service, a concern which was generally shared by Member States. The national competitive examination process also sought to address the long-standing concerns of Member States with respect to unrepresented and underrepresented States. Experience had shown that it was extremely unwise to halt that valuable intake of staff because of an ad hoc situation. Maintaining the intake was also a signal of confidence on the part of the Secretary-General that, with effective management and the support and guidance of the Member States, the important work of the global Secretariat would be sustained in the years ahead.

52. Replying to questions relating to the efficiency reviews and the Efficiency Board, he said that information regarding the terms of reference and the role of the Efficiency Board had been published in document ST/SGB/281 and in annex VI of the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/50/7/Add.16). While the Secretariat was seeking to reduce cost in the short term by finding more efficient ways of doing things, the majority of the more than 300 issues proposed by programme managers and the thrust of cross-cutting reviews were directed at finding ways to achieve efficiency gains over the long term. Information technology, on which the future of the Organization depended, was one example of short-term investment for long-term gain.

53. On the question of whether the Efficiency Board would be disbanded if it had to be funded from the regular budget, he noted that the Board's cost was so minimal compared to its benefits to the Organization that there was currently no plan to disband it. However, the scope of the Board's efforts had increased and it was operating on such a shoestring of voluntary contributions that the lack of any plans to institutionalize it gave cause for some concern. It had been possible to staff the working group of the Board through the generous commitment of experts and fellows from some 30 countries. A trust fund had also been established to cover the incidental costs of the Board and to support the participation of experts from developing countries. To date the fund had received pledges of over $60,000. All voluntary contributions to the efficiency exercise, whether in cash or kind, would be reported to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

54. Concerning the planned targets for efficiency reviews and the relationship between such reviews and budget reductions, in order to achieve the budget reductions mandated by the General Assembly, every programme manager had been given a proportional budget reduction in order to achieve overall budget reductions of $154 million. At the same time, programme managers had been asked to conduct efficiency reviews in order to identify savings and increase their effectiveness with a view to mitigating the impact of budget cuts. The Organization welcomed the challenge of achieving more with less resources and programme managers were being trained to re-evaluate their projects.

55. The Efficiency Board had so far focused primarily on departmental studies aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the delivery of mandated programmes. That phase was nearing completion and the second phase consisted of a series of cross-cutting reviews on such topics as human resources management, information technology and documentation. In the future, the Board would advise the

Secretary-General on areas where there might be duplication and overlap and where mandated programmes might be providing the least value for Member States.

56. Ms. INCERA (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, regrettably, the Under-Secretary-General had failed to address all the concerns raised by the Group of 77 and China. She hoped that answers to the remaining questions would be provided in plenary meeting and that the measures being proposed by the Secretariat would not affect the full implementation of mandated programmes and activities, as provided for in General Assembly resolution 50/214.

57. Mr. ODAGA-JALOMAYO (Uganda) said that the replies given by the Under-Secretary-General constituted a good basis for subsequent discussions. As the representative of a developing country, he hoped that it would be possible to restore pencils and paper to conference rooms as the financial situation of the Organization improved. Finally, it was important for the Secretariat to consider the full impact of re-engineering as it explored that modality of achieving savings.

The meeting rose at noon.